



## **PARATRANSIT PASSENGER HANDBOOK**

EFFECTIVE: January 2023  
Clarification Update: August 2023

333 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
RAPID CITY, SD 57701  
(605) 394-6631

## **WHAT IS ADA PARATRANSIT?**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, (ADA), recognized that some individuals with disabilities would not be able to use a regular fixed-route bus service *even with* improvements to make the services fully accessible. Because of this, the ADA said that transit agencies, which provide regular fixed-route bus service must also provide complementary ADA Paratransit service for those persons whose disabilities prevent them from using regular lift-equipped fixed-route bus service for some or all their transportation needs. **This does not include disabilities that make use of regular accessible transit service difficult or inconvenient.** According to the law, ADA Paratransit is to “complement” the regular bus service, providing service that is comparable to the regular bus service in terms of service area, hours and days of service, and several other factors. The specific criteria for determining who is eligible for ADA Paratransit are defined by ADA law.

## **IS DIAL-A-RIDE BUS SERVICE FOR YOU?**

Eligibility Requirements: Dial-A-Ride (DAR) is the ADA Paratransit service for Rapid Transit System (RTS). Currently, only riders who meet the criteria specified by the ADA can become certified as eligible to use Dial-A-Ride service. Eligibility is based on necessity, not preference.

## **HOW CAN I APPLY FOR DIAL-A-RIDE?**

Application forms are available at the Milo Barber Transportation/Rapid Transit System office, located at 333 6<sup>th</sup> Street; or can be printed from our website online at [www.rapidride.org](http://www.rapidride.org) . If you would like an application mailed to you, or have questions regarding ADA or Dial-A-Ride, please call RTS dispatch at: 605-394-6631, extension 0. Applications can take up to 21 days to process once received. Incomplete applications cannot be processed.

## **WHERE AND WHEN CAN YOU GO?**

Dial-A-Ride travels within the corporate city limits of Rapid City. The length of your trip depends on the number of stops the bus will make for other passengers. Every effort will be made to ensure the shortest trip possible. Dial-A-Ride pick-ups begin at 6:10 AM and the last ride will be 5:50 PM Monday through Friday; and we start at 8:30 AM through 5:30 PM on Saturdays, depending on the pick-up and drop-off locations.

We are closed for the following holidays: New Year’s Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth (June 19<sup>th</sup>), Fourth of July, Labor Day, Native American Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and Christmas Day. Any other times Rapid Transit System would be closed will be posted on the buses, our website and our Facebook page.

Dial-A-Ride does not call riders to remind them of Holiday closures. Riders are encouraged to utilize this handbook, bus notices or call in to verify if/when Dial-A-Ride is closed.

## **HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?**

The fares for Dial-A-Ride are as follows:

**Cash Fare**     Zone 1 - \$3.00 one way. \*Zone 2 - \$3.50 one way.

**Tickets**        Zone 1 – 10 for \$27.00. \*Zone 2 – 10 for \$31.50

**Monthly Pass** unlimited rides in Zone 1 & \*Zone 2 - \$90.00  
(\*Zone 2 is any location more than ¾ mile from the nearest fixed-route bus route)

**Exact fare is required. Drivers do not carry change. Drivers are not able to process debit or credit cards. Please go to Milo Barber Transportation Center if you need to pay with a debit or credit card. We cannot process payment over the phone or via the internet.**

### **HOW DO YOU ARRANGE FOR A RIDE?**

Simply call the RTS office by dialing 605-394-6631, extension "0," this will get you through to the dispatcher. We are able to schedule by phone from **7:00 AM to 3:30 PM** Monday through Friday. Dial-A-Ride does not schedule, re-schedule, or adjust same day rides. When you call to schedule, please have the following information ready:

1. Your first and last name, or the rider's name if scheduling for someone else
2. Your phone number
3. The day and date you need to schedule.
4. Your home address or the address that you would like to be picked up from
5. **The address and the name of your destination.** We need the actual street number, street name and name of location.
6. Your appointment time, or when you need to be at your destination.
7. When you would like to be picked up from your destination.
8. Specify if you are returning to your original location or going to a different location.
9. If a companion, a personal care attendant (PCA), or service animal will accompany you.

Our scheduling is based on a "twenty-minute ready window". That is, if you tell the dispatcher you need to be at an appointment by 8:00, we may tell you that your pick-up time may be at 7:30 am. However, this means that the bus could arrive anytime between 7:30 and 7:50 and the drivers will wait a maximum of five (5) minutes from the time they arrive before leaving. Please be patient and keep this in mind when scheduling trips. Dial-A-Ride will make every effort to be on time.

We strive to schedule you for pickups and arrivals so that you're early for your appointments, and with limited stops. You may arrive as early as 1 hour before your appointment time, depending upon the schedule on our ride share program. All ADA eligible passengers on the bus will receive service within one hour and 10 minutes of their pickup time.

The same procedure will be used for the return times. You may tell the dispatcher that you would like to be picked up at 11:00. Again, this would mean that the bus could arrive any time between 11:00 am and 11:20 am, and the drivers will wait a maximum of five (5) minutes from the time they arrive before leaving.

We have the capability of scheduling your ride up to 14 days in advance, but no later than 3:30pm the day prior to your needed ride. When you call in, you will need to have all of the information listed above, ready for the dispatcher. She/he will give you your times before hanging up, or may need to call you back. Please record this information in a safe place as a reminder.

### **OFF HOURS SCHEDULING:**

You may call dispatch at 605-394-6631 extension 0, Saturday or Sunday between 7:00 AM and 3:30 PM, leaving the same information as requested above on our voice mail. Your trip will not be processed unless you leave all this information. (We do not have staff available to schedule your rides over the weekend). We will schedule all rides as requested and notify you Monday morning or the next business day. Please make every effort to cooperate.

### **Here is an example of how to schedule a ride when leaving a voicemail:**

My name is: (RIDER'S NAME) Jill Jones. I would like to schedule a ride for: (DAY, MONTH AND DATE) Monday, May 7th. I need to be picked up at: (PICKUP ADDRESS) 100 Blank Street, which is: (LOCATION NAME) My home, and taken to: (DESTINATION ADDRESS) 2200 North Maple Ave, the Food Court Door, which is: (NAME OF FACILITY) Rushmore Mall. My appointment time is/I would like to arrive at: (TIME) 11am. I will need to be there until: (TIME) 3pm. Afterwards, I will need to go to: (ADDRESS) 100 Blank Street, which is: (LOCATION NAME) My home. I will have a PCA with me. My phone number is: (YOUR PHONE NUMBER) 306.000.8001.

### **Here is an example of how to cancel ride(s) when leaving a voicemail:**

My name is: (RIDER'S NAME) Jill Jones. I need to cancel my rides for: (DAY, MONTH, DATE and TIME) Monday, May 7th.

***If you are canceling only one ride on a day when you have multiple rides scheduled, please specify which ride(s) you are cancelling and which you are keeping.***

### **SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES**

If you need consistent and reoccurring rides to the same place, at the same time, (such as: going to work M-F at 9am; or a doctor appointment every Tuesday at 10am; or even a meeting once a month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 1pm), a subscription service may be a good option for you. This service allows you to schedule these trips with one call. You will then be automatically placed on the schedule each week. Subscription rides are available for week days only, not on Saturdays. To request a subscription schedule please call the dispatch office at 605-394-6631 extension 0.

Once a subscription service is requested it may take two weeks before it will become active in the system. Riders may schedule demand rides until the subscription is active.

If you are receiving a subscription service, it is important to let us know immediately if you don't need a ride on a particular day. This way, we can make the change on our schedules. For example, if

you have a subscription service to work each weekday, keep us updated on holiday or vacation times when your work will be closed or you'll be on vacation. This will help us avoid unnecessary trips and you will not receive a no-show.

### **SUBSCRIPTION ABUSE POLICY**

Subscriptions are offered as a convenience to riders who have the same regular trip needs for the foreseeable future. Constant changes to subscriptions create excessive work for staff and causes disturbances in service for other riders. Any rider that requests to alter any part of a subscription more than once every quarter (3 months), will risk losing their ability to utilize subscription scheduling for a period of 1 quarter (3 months).

### **SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE WAIT LIST**

Dial-A-Ride wait list is for subscription service scheduling only. If you currently have a subscription, but are restructuring your ride(s) it will be considered a new subscription. At the time of the request, it will be determined if the new subscription can be added to the current DAR schedule. If your request cannot be accommodated, you may be offered alternate times and/or placed on a wait list. DAR may implement a subscription service wait list as needed. If you are placed on a waitlist the following will take place:

1. Your name, requested time/date and location will be added to the waitlist.
2. The waitlist is reviewed every time there is an alteration of another subscription service.
3. If/when we can accommodate you subscription request, you will be contacted.

### **HOW DO I CANCEL A RIDE?**

When calling to cancel a ride, please provide the following information for the dispatcher: Your first and last name, your pick-up address, the address of your destination, and the time(s) of the ride(s) you wish to cancel. If you are canceling a round trip or multiple trips, you will need to give us the information for all trips. Cancellation of scheduled services must be made at least one hour prior to your scheduled ride time to avoid any penalty. Violation of this policy may result in suspension of ridership privileges.

### **LATE CANCELATION POLICY**

Riders are expected to provide Dial-A-Ride with ample time to cancel a ride so that other riders may utilize that time and space on the bus. Riders can cancel rides up to 14 days in advance, but should cancel rides no later than 60 minutes (1 hour) prior to their scheduled pick-up time. In an effort to reduce late canceling abuse, ridership privileges may be suspended for 30 days if a rider schedules nine or more rides and cancels more than 20% of those rides late during a 30-day period.

### **CHANGING YOUR RESERVATION**

If you need to change a reservation, please call RTS dispatch office between the hours of 7:00 am and 3:30 pm, no later than the day before your scheduled trip. Requests for changes to your reservation on the day of your trip will not be accepted. Do not ask the driver to make changes to

your trip, such as dropping you off at a different address. Drivers are not allowed to make changes to their assigned trips.

### **SCHEDULING ABUSE POLICY**

Frequently scheduling and cancelling rides not only monopolizes the dispatchers time, it also causes disturbances in service for other riders. In an effort to reduce scheduling abuse, ridership privileges may be suspended for 30 days if a rider schedules nine or more rides and cancels more than 30% of those rides during a 30-day period.

### **NO SHOWS**

Due to chronic abuse by a small percentage of the riding public, Rapid Transit System has developed a policy regarding passengers who no show when scheduled for service. The no show policy is as follows:

All persons who schedule service and fail to show for an appointment without canceling the scheduled service within 15 minutes before their pickup time, will be treated as a no show. Cancellations upon arrival will likewise be treated as a no show. In an effort to reduce no show abuse, ridership privileges may be suspended for 30 days if a rider schedules nine or more rides and no show's more than 10% of those rides during a 30-day period.

The driver **will not** honk or call you on your phone when they arrive. Please be ready to leave when the bus arrives. If you need door-to-door service, the driver will knock on your door or ring your door bell only. If there's inclement weather, the driver may go back to the bus until he/she sees your door open and will come out to assist.

The driver may arrive at your pickup location early, and this may happen from time to time. You do not need to get on the bus early if the bus arrives early for your pickup. The 5 minutes does not start until your actual pickup time. (Example: your pickup time is 8:00 am, but the driver arrived at your house at 7:55 am. The driver will wait until 8:05 am before leaving your pickup location, if you're not on the bus.)

### **WHO CAN RIDE WITH ME?**

Personal care attendants (PCA's) may ride with you at no additional cost.

You may also have one or more "guest" accompany you. There is a charge for the "guest" and they must board and de-board from the same location as the ADA certified individual. All guests, including children, will need to pay a fare by cash or check to ride. Guests who are also Dial-A-Ride clients may use a punch ticket, or monthly pass.

Riders are responsible for the behavior and actions of their PCA's and Guests. PCA's and guests who fail to abide by the Dial-A-Ride behavior expectations risk suspension from accompanying a rider for a period of 7 days to 90 days.

## **ASSISTING PASSENGERS USING A WHEELCHAIR**

Dial-A-Ride will accommodate all standard wheelchairs. We will attempt to accommodate scooters and other mobility devices. Passengers using mobility aids that exceed the “standard size” may request service, and Dial-A-Ride staff will determine if service may be provided. Please share mobility aid information with dispatch when you schedule.

The Rapid Transit System encourages all wheelchairs and scooters to be in safe operating condition including handgrips, locking brakes, inflated tires, and footrests to safeguard passenger’s feet. However, riders will not be denied service if their wheelchair or scooter does not include these safety features. Every attempt will be made to secure wheelchairs and scooters.

The passenger may choose to transfer to a seat or remain in their mobility device once on the bus. Passengers must be in an upright sitting position, facing forward for transport.

DAR drivers may assist with pushing a manual wheelchair or providing guidance to the rider. Dial-A-Ride drivers are not allowed to assist passengers using electric wheelchairs, or scooters. These riders must be able to use their mobility devices independently. Drivers are not allowed to assist passengers using other mobility devices up or down any steps. Drivers are not allowed to perform any services that may pose a health or safety risk to the rider or themselves.

In order to assure the safety of our passengers and drivers, if a wheelchair passenger is requesting door-to-door service to a ramp location, this can only be provided if: (1) the passenger arranges assistance (such as a PCA), up and down the ramp from someone other than a Dial-A-Ride driver or (2) the ramp complies with the standard for ramps identified in the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities regulations (i.e., Appendix A to Part 37 of the ADA).

## **WHERE TO WAIT**

This paratransit program provides curb-to-curb or door-to-door service for eligible riders. Riders need to be waiting at the main entrances or as close to the entrance of the pickup location as possible. Drivers will wait for the rider(s) at the curb of a public street, or as close as possible to the entrance of the pickup location. Not all locations are accessible for a DAR bus, however reasonable attempts will be made to get as close to the location as safely possible. For drop offs, the driver will stop as close as possible to the designated drop off location as safety permits. If DAR drops you off at a destination, we will pick you up from that same area. Please remember that drivers will only wait 5 minutes once they arrive at the location. Drivers will not go into any residence or building to find the rider.

Riders will be picked up and dropped off, and will receive assistance from the driver when there are ADA approved pathways and services are declared on the driver’s schedule.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Please be sure to plan your DAR trips accordingly, especially when shopping. Riders must be able to board the bus, independently, with all their items in one trip. Riders cannot get on and off the bus

multiple times in an effort to get all their belongings onto the bus. The number of personal items, such as bags, should also be limited to what can fit on the rider's lap, under a seat or attached to a mobility device. The drivers are not responsible for your personal belongings. Drivers will not help with carrying bags, groceries, personal items, walkers, etc., onto and off the bus.

### **FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

Passengers are not permitted to eat or drink while on the bus. Any food or drink that is brought onto the bus must be in a sealed, leak-proof container. A bag of recently purchased and unopened groceries is acceptable.

### **TOBACCO, SMOKING AND VAPING**

Tobacco use, smoking and vaping is strictly prohibited on City property, including the buses.

### **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

Dial-A-Ride is committed to providing safe and reliable transportation. As a customer you have the right to be treated fairly and considerately. In return, we ask that our riders and caretakers are courteous and respectful towards each other, the drivers and other RTS staff.

Any rider that conducts themselves in a manner that is discourteous, disrespectful, inappropriate or otherwise unacceptable toward dispatchers, drivers, management staff and/or other riders risks a suspension from Dial-A-Ride services for a period of 7 days to 90 days. This includes riders that chose to not abide by Dial-A-Ride policies after adequate warning, explanation and support.

Dial-A-Ride strives to create good working relationships with caretakers, family members and staff who support riders. However, the same behavioral expectations apply to these individuals. Failure to meet these expectations can result in the temporary loss of a person's ability to work with RTS on a rider's behalf.

### **SEAT BELTS**

Seat belts are available for the safety of our passengers. Passengers are encouraged to use the seat belts, but not required. Shoulder harnesses are available for passengers in wheelchairs at the passenger's request. If you need assistance, please ask the driver.

### **SERVICE ANIMALS**

Any animals individually trained to work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability, including but not limited to guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items are allowed. Please contact Rapid Transit regarding the requirements for service animals on the bus before scheduling your ride(s). Pets are not allowed at any time.

### **VISITORS**

Any ADA eligible individuals who live outside the corporate city limits of Rapid City are eligible for 21 days of service while visiting the Rapid City area. These 21 days are calculated over a period of 365 days, not 21 calendar days.



Visitors that are not certified in another jurisdiction are to be processed quickly for visitor status if proper documentation is submitted verifying a disability that prevents them from using the regular fixed-route bus.

## **WEATHER**

### **Weather Related Access to Private Homes**

Passengers are responsible for snow and ice removal to make their homes accessible to the Dial-A-Ride drivers. If the home is not accessible the ride will be considered a cancel upon arrival.

### **Winter Weather Procedures**

In case of an accumulation of snow or ice, Dial-A-Ride drivers will follow these procedures:

1. If weather conditions and/or snow/ice accumulations do not allow for the bus lift to be safely deployed, the driver will not attempt a pick up. The driver will notify dispatch, and dispatch will attempt to notify the resident that the ride cannot be provided.
2. If the lift can be safely deployed, but the sidewalk or driveway to or from the bus is not sufficiently clear of snow or ice (to enable passengers in a mobility device to proceed to or from the bus), the driver will notify dispatch of this condition. Dispatch will then notify the resident of the condition. If the passenger is able to reach the bus on his or her own, then the ride will resume.

Riders are encouraged to reach out to Dial-A-Ride if they feel their road is impassable. They do not need to wait for RTS staff to make that determination.

## **DISCONTINUING SERVICE DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS**

Rapid Transit will make every effort to provide service whenever scheduled. In the event that extreme weather conditions exist making travel unsafe, RTS reserves the right to discontinue Dial-A-Ride services until conditions are favorable. If service is temporarily discontinued, all rides will be canceled.

If RTS discontinues service during normal business hours due to weather conditions, every effort will be made to return the passenger home.

Information on weather-related service changes may be obtained by calling RTS at 605-394-6631 extension 0, or checking our website at [www.rapidride.org](http://www.rapidride.org) and go to the Dial-A-Ride tab. Information of service changes will also be distributed through the following broadcast or social media outlets: KOTA TV or KOTA Radio -1380 AM/100.7 FM or RTS and City of Rapid City's Facebook pages.

## **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

If at any time you feel you may need a special accommodation, please call 605-394-6631 extension 2, and speak with the Operations Coordinator.